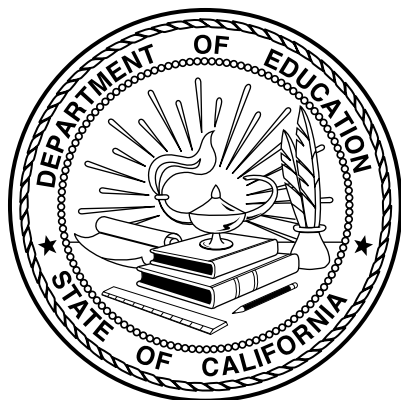

Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program



Guides for 2007 STAR Program Tests

Information for Parents and Guardians

- **STAR Program Overview**
- **STAR Program Tests**
- **Helping Students Achieve**
- **Accessing the STAR Program Web Site**
- **Glossary of Terms**

March 2007

Prepared by the
California Department of Education

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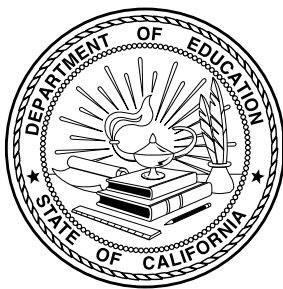
Purpose

Welcome! Educating California's students is a team effort. To fully participate on this team, parents and guardians as well as school staff and students need to know and understand the role of the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program in ensuring all students achieve California's content standards in core subject areas.

Guides for 2007 STAR Program Tests: Information for Parents and Guardians is for anyone who is looking for detailed information about the STAR Program, its tests, and uses of its results. Most of the information is formatted by topic into two-page guides for parents and guardians. There also is a separate brochure that briefly describes ways parents and guardians can help their students achieve. In addition, there is a "Glossary of Frequently Used Acronyms for Assessment and Accountability" at the end of the packet. (For a complete listing of the material included in this packet with page references, see the Table of Contents.)

Uses of Information and Materials

All of the parent/guardian guides, the brochure, and the glossary are in PDF files and can be downloaded and reproduced. The guides and brochure also will be posted in Spanish as well as English as soon as translations are available. A chart with suggested uses for this material by school district and school staff when communicating with parents and guardians is available in the "Resources for Use by School District and School Staff — Chart 2" in *Communicating with Parents and Guardians About 2007 STAR Program Tests: Resources for Use by School District and School Staff*, that is posted on the California Department of Education Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/resources.asp>.



STAR

2007 Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program

Parent/Guardian Guide to the 2007 STAR Program

The tests in the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program are an important part of the state assessment system. These tests are administered each spring to measure how well students in California public schools are achieving state content standards. These achievement tests target English-language arts and mathematics in all grades tested. In addition, tests in science and history-social science are given in selected grades.

Educating students is a team effort. Parents, guardians, students, schools, and communities benefit when there is a shared responsibility for learning. To fully participate as part of this team, parents and guardians should have a thorough understanding of the role the tests in the STAR Program play in making sure that all students achieve state content standards.

Questions and Answers About the STAR Program

Who participates in the STAR Program?

All students in grades two through eleven in California public schools participate in the STAR Program each spring. This includes students with disabilities and English learners.

What are the tests in the 2007 STAR Program?

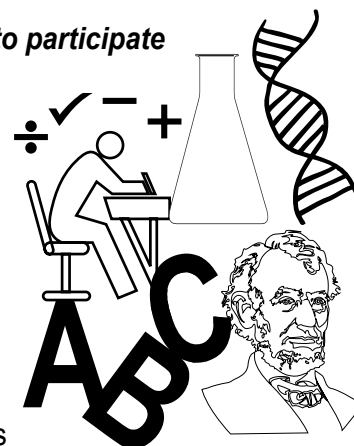
- The California Standards Tests (CSTs) measure the achievement of state content standards in English-language arts, mathematics, science, and history-social science.
- The California Achievement Tests, Sixth Edition Survey (CAT/6 Survey), are nationally norm-referenced tests that measure the achievement

of general academic knowledge in core subject areas and provide national comparisons. (These tests are given in grades three and seven only.)

- The California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA) was developed as an alternate assessment in English-language arts and mathematics for students who have significant cognitive disabilities and cannot take the CSTs even with accommodations or modifications.
- The Standards-based Tests in Spanish (STS) have been developed for Spanish-speaking English learners and measure the achievement of state content standards in reading-language arts and mathematics in Spanish. (These tests are given in grades two, three, and four in 2007.)
- The Aprenda, La prueba de logros en español, Tercera edición (Aprenda 3), is a nationally norm-referenced achievement test of general academic knowledge in Spanish for Spanish-speaking English learners. (These tests are given in grades five through eleven in 2007.)

Does my student have to participate in the annual STAR Program testing?

Yes. All students must participate unless their parents or guardians have submitted written requests to exempt them from STAR Program testing (*Education Code* Section 60615). It is very important that all students



Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program

Parent/Guardian Guide to the 2007 STAR Program

take part in the STAR Program. Each school must have at least 95 percent of its students participate in statewide assessments in order to meet federal accountability requirements.

When will I receive my student's STAR Student Report?

Most parents and guardians will receive the STAR student reports by the end of September 2007.

What information will my student's report include?

Your student's report will focus on results of the CSTs or the CAPA. When reviewing the report, you first will see scores and performance levels for each subject area tested. Performance levels of proficient or advanced indicate that your student is meeting or surpassing the state's target for academic achievement. Performance levels of basic, below basic, or far below basic indicate areas of learning that need improvement.

In addition, the STAR Student Report will include scores for specific content areas within each subject area tested and a California Reading List (CRL) Number. An explanation about all of the information included in your student's report will accompany the STAR Student Report.

Note: Parents and guardians should be reminded that individual student results are confidential and maintained only by the school district. The CDE does not keep individual student results and, therefore, cannot respond to parent and guardian requests for their student's results.

What is the California Reading List Number?

The California Reading List (CRL) Number is an index based on each student's score on the CST in English-language arts. Parents, guardians, students, and teachers may use the CRL to access a list of books that are at a student's reading level. The list is available on the Internet at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/readinglist.asp>. You and your student may find

this list helpful when selecting books for reading at home.

How will results of the STS or Aprenda 3 be reported to parents and guardians?

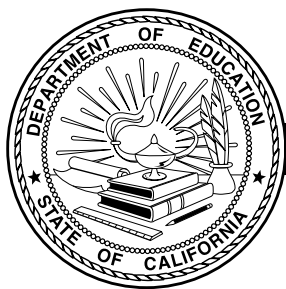
As required for all tests in the STAR Program, student reports for the STS or Aprenda 3 must be distributed to parents or guardians within 20 working days after the school district receives them. The STS and Aprenda 3 student reports should arrive in most school districts by the end of August. The student reports for these two tests will be provided in Spanish.

How are the 2007 STAR Program results used to improve my student's education?

- STAR Program results provide information about each student's progress that is used to help parents or guardians and teachers work together to improve student learning.
- Schools use STAR Program results to help make decisions about how best to support student achievement.
- STAR Program results also can be used, along with other available data, to assist in identifying students for promotion or retention and for special intervention or enrichment programs. Test results, however, should never be used as the only source of information to make important decisions about a student's education.

How to find out more...

If you have additional questions about the California content standards or the STAR Program, please direct them to your student's teacher, counselor, or the school office. You also will find answers to your questions about the STAR Program on the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/resources.asp>. The California content standards can be reviewed at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/>.



STAR

2007 Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program

Parent/Guardian Guide to the 2007 California Standards Tests

The California Standards Tests (CSTs) are given to students in grades two through eleven as part of the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program. Developed exclusively for California's public schools, the CSTs are intended to provide information that can be used to determine how well students are achieving state content standards. These standards describe the knowledge and skills that students should learn at each grade level. The content standards for all subject areas and grade levels tested are available on the California Department of Education (CDE) Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/>.

Questions and Answers About the CSTs

Who takes the CSTs?

All students participating in the STAR Program take the CSTs, except for students with significant cognitive disabilities who are unable to take these tests. Students with significant cognitive disabilities take the California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA), which is based on selected content standards in English-language arts and mathematics.

What is done to help students with disabilities who take the CSTs?

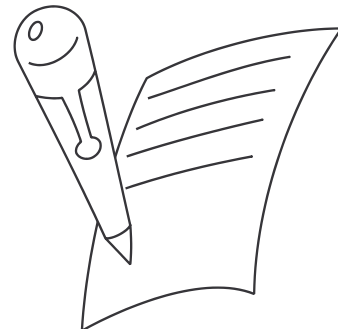
Most students with disabilities take the CSTs along with all other students under standard conditions. Some students with disabilities may require testing variations, accommodations, and/or modifications to be able to take the tests. These are listed in the *Matrix of Test*

Variations, Accommodations, and Modifications for Administration of California Statewide Assessments, which is available on the California Department of Education (CDE) Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/>.

Test variations are allowed for any student who regularly uses them in the classroom. Accommodations and modifications must be specified in each student's individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan. No below-grade-level testing is allowed.

What is done to help students who are English learners?

English learners may use English-to-primary language translation glossaries or word lists that do not include definitions or formulas and are regularly used in the classroom. English learners may use these glossaries or word lists for all subjects on the CSTs except English-language arts. They also may have test directions translated for them and ask clarifying questions in their primary language for all subjects tested on the CSTs, including English-language arts. Students who are English learners may be tested separately if such a setting is part of the regular classroom instruction or assessments. The variations allowed for English learners are listed on the last page of the *Matrix of Test Variations, Accommodations,*



Parent/Guardian Guide to the 2007 California Standards Tests

and Modifications for Administration of California Statewide Assessments, which is available on the California Department of Education (CDE) Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/>.

What grade levels and subject areas are tested on the CSTs?

The following grade levels and subject areas are tested:

- Grades two, three, four, six, and seven
 - English-language arts*
 - Mathematics
- Grade five
 - English-language arts
 - Mathematics
 - Science
- Grades eight, nine, and eleven
 - English-language arts
 - Mathematics
 - Science
 - History-social science
- Grade ten
 - English-language arts
 - Mathematics
 - Science** □
 - History-social science

What content is tested on the CSTs?

There are three kinds of CSTs, which are all based on state content standards. First, there are CSTs that are based on content standards from a specific grade level and subject area such as grade two mathematics and grade ten English-language arts. Second, there are end-of-course CSTs administered at the secondary

level that are based on content standards from specific courses. Mathematics, science, and history-social science are the three subject areas that have end-of-course CSTs. Third, there are CSTs that cover selected subject-area content standards from more than one grade level.

What question formats are found on the CSTs?

Questions for all of the CSTs, except for the writing tasks in grades four and seven, are in a multiple-choice format. Students are presented with a question and asked to select the correct answer from four possible choices. Students mark their answer choices in the test booklet for grades two and three and on an answer document for grades four through eleven. All multiple-choice questions are machine scored. Released CST questions from prior administrations are posted for public viewing on the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/resources.asp>.

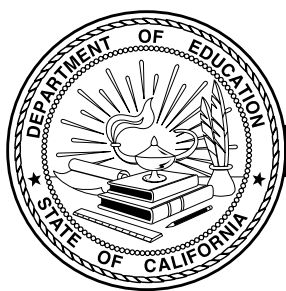
For the CST in English-language arts, students in grades four and seven respond to multiple-choice questions and write an essay in response to a writing task or prompt. The score on the writing task is combined with the results of the multiple-choice questions to produce an overall score and the performance level for the CST in English-language arts.

How to find out more...

If you have additional questions about the CSTs, please direct them to your student's teacher, counselor, or the school office. You also will find answers to your questions about the CSTs on the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/resources.asp>. The California content standards can be reviewed at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/>.

*□ Students in grades four and seven also complete a writing task as part of the CST in English-language arts.

** Most grade ten students take two science CSTs.



STAR

2007 Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program

Parent/Guardian Guide to the California Writing Standards Test

Each spring, public school students in grades four and seven who participate in the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program complete a writing task as part of the California English-Language Arts Standards Test (CST in English-language arts). This writing task is called the California Writing Standards Test or the CST in writing.

Questions and Answers About the CST in Writing

Who takes the CST in writing?

All students in grades four and seven who take the multiple-choice part of the CST in English-language arts also write one essay in response to a writing task (prompt).

What type of essay are students required to write?

The type of essay that will be required for the CST in writing is not announced in advance; therefore, students must be prepared to write to all the following possible types of essays for their respective grade level:

- Students in grade four may be asked to write a narrative (story), a response to literature, or a summary of a reading passage.
- Students in grade seven may be asked to write a fictional narrative (story), a response to literature, a persuasive letter or essay, or a summary of a reading passage.

Where can parents and guardians see sample writing tasks?

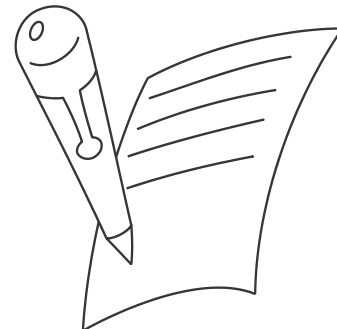
Writing tasks used in previous STAR Program administrations have been released for public viewing. These tasks are available on the California Department of Education (CDE) Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/resources.asp>. The released tasks include samples of student essays for each possible score point. All writing tasks are based on state writing strategies, writing applications, and written conventions standards that are part of the English-language arts content standards.

How much time are students given to write the essay?

The CST in writing is not timed. Students are given approximately 75 minutes to read the information, plan their essays, and complete one draft of the essay. Students who are actively working on their essays at the end of the allotted time must be allowed more time to complete the essay. Readers who score the essays take into account that each essay is a first draft.

How are the student essays scored?

Experienced readers are trained to use specific guidelines (rubrics) to score the student essays. These rubrics are included in teacher



Parent/Guardian Guide to the California Writing Standards Test

guides found at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/resources.asp>.

What are the key traits readers look for to determine the score?

Readers carefully read each essay to determine the level of writing skills the student has shown. For example, readers examine essays to see if ideas are thoroughly developed and supported with appropriate details. Readers also evaluate the essay for organization, word choice, sentence structure, grammar, and mechanics (i.e., spelling, punctuation, capitalization).

What is the “passing” score for the CST in writing?

There is no “passing” score for the CST in writing. The points assigned to the essay are combined with the number of multiple-choice questions answered correctly to produce the overall score and performance level for the CST in English-language arts. The score on the writing task is also converted to a percent correct, which is reported under the Writing Applications content area on back of the STAR Student Report.

Helping Your Students Improve Their Writing

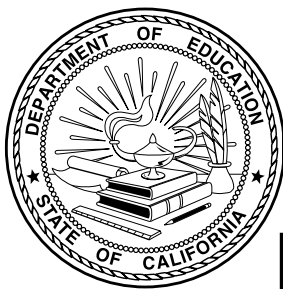
The following are some suggested ways you can help students improve their writing skills:

- Talk with teachers and administrators about the school’s writing program and the expectations for students’ writing performance. When you share a common understanding of the writing skills your students are being taught at school, you can provide more effective support at home.

- Encourage your students to write lists, notes, thank-you notes, requests, journals, recipes, book reports, short stories, e-mails, and other types of writing. As with any skill, writing improves the more it is practiced.
- For writing assignments, talk with your students about what they are being asked to do and help them list the points to be covered. As your students complete the assignment, point out parts that are written well and ask questions about parts that are not clear. Help your students focus on developing their ideas in their writing before correcting the mechanics (i.e., spelling, punctuation, capitalization).
- Provide your students with the things they need to write. In addition to paper, pencils, and other writing tools, make sure your students have a dictionary and thesaurus, a quiet place to write, and a folder or notebook to keep their ideas, drafts, and other pieces of writing they have done.

How to find out more...

If you have additional questions about your school’s writing program, please direct them to your student’s teacher, counselor, or school office. You also will find answers to your questions about the CST in writing or any tests in the STAR Program on the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/resources.asp>.



STAR

2007 Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program

Parent/Guardian Guide to the STAR Program Tests for English Learners

The tests in the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program are given each spring to all students in grades two through eleven in California public schools to measure their academic achievement. This includes English learners. English learners are students who have not developed sufficient skills in reading, writing, listening, and speaking in English to participate in the regular school program.

Questions and Answers About the STAR Program Tests for English Learners

Is my student required to participate in the STAR Program?

Yes. All English learners in grades two through eleven are required to participate in the STAR Program. Regardless of their primary language, English learners must take the STAR Program tests administered in English. This includes the California Standards Tests (CSTs) and, in grades three and seven only, the California Achievement Tests, Sixth Edition Survey (CAT/6 Survey). In addition, eligible Spanish-speaking English learners are required to take a designated primary language test.

What assistance is provided to my student on the STAR Program tests administered in English?

English learners may use English-to-primary language translation glossaries or word lists that do not include definitions or formulas and are regularly used in the classroom. These glossaries or word lists may be provided for all subjects except English-language arts on the CSTs but may not be provided in any subject area on the CAT/6 Survey. English learners also may have test directions translated for them and ask clarifying questions

in their primary language for all subjects tested on the CSTs and the CAT/6 Survey. A list of the assistance allowed for English learners is outlined on the last page of the *Matrix of Test Variations, Accommodations, and Modifications for Administration of California Statewide Assessments*, which is available on the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/>.

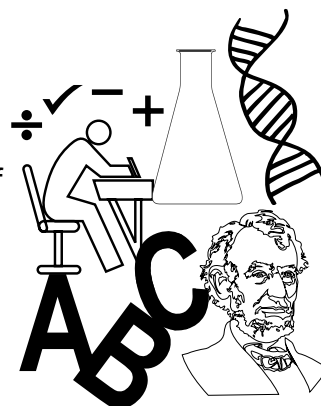
What is the designated primary language test (DPLT)?

The DPLT is part of the STAR Program. In spring 2007, the DPLT administered in grades two, three, and four, are the Standards-based Tests in Spanish (STS). In grades five through eleven, the DPLT is the Aprenda, La prueba de logros en español, Tercera edición (Aprenda 3). Both tests are administered in Spanish to eligible Spanish-speaking English learners. There is no DPLT for English learners who speak primary languages other than Spanish.

Is my student required to take the DPLT?

If your student is in grades two through eleven and meets either of the following criteria, he or she is required to take the DPLT (*Education Code Section 60640*):

- All Spanish-speaking English learners who receive instruction in Spanish regardless of how long they have been in school in the United States



Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program

Parent/Guardian Guide to the STAR Program Tests for English Learners

- All Spanish-speaking English learners who have been enrolled in a school in the United States for less than 12 months

Remember that the DPLT is taken **in addition** to the CSTs and CAT/6 Survey, which are administered in English.

When will the STS or Aprenda 3 be given to my student in the spring 2007?

School districts are required to give the STS during the same window as scheduled for the CSTs. School districts are required to give the Aprenda 3 between March 15 and May 14, 2007. Please check with your school or school district for the testing dates for your student.

Can I request that my student be excused from the STAR Program tests, including the DPLT?

Yes. Parents or guardians may submit written requests to exempt their students from any or all STAR Program tests (*Education Code* Section 60615). Please contact your student's teacher or school administration about the requirements to obtain this exemption.

May I see the STS or Aprenda 3?

No. *Education Code* Section 60616 states that all of the tests in the STAR Program, including the STS and Aprenda 3, are secure and cannot be seen by anyone other than the students who take the tests and the parties specified by law such as school board members or legislators.

When will I receive my student's STS or Aprenda 3 report of results?

Student reports for the STS or Aprenda 3 must be distributed to parents or guardians within 20 working days after the school district receives them.

Most school districts should receive these reports by the end of August. Student reports for the STS and Aprenda 3 will be provided in Spanish.

What information will be included on the STS or Aprenda 3 report?

Results on the STS student report will show how well students achieved identified content standards for reading-language arts and mathematics. The STS report will provide the percent correct for each subject area. The Aprenda 3 student report will include score information for each subject area of the test, including reading, mathematics, language, and spelling.

How are STS or Aprenda 3 results used to help my student achieve in school?

The results in the STS or Aprenda 3 student report may be used with other achievement information to identify your student's academic strengths and areas that need improvement.

The STS or Aprenda 3 student report is one source of information about the progress Spanish-speaking English learners are making in school. Parents or guardians should also review grades, classroom work, and results from other classroom, school district, and state tests for a more complete picture of each student's academic progress.

How to find out more...

If you have additional questions about the STS, Aprenda 3, or other tests in the STAR Program please direct them to your student's teacher, counselor, or the school office. You also will find answers to your questions about the STAR Program on the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/resources.asp>.



S T A R ☐

2007 Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program

Parent/Guardian Guide to the California Alternate Performance Assessment

The California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA) is part of the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program. This test is an alternate assessment for students with significant cognitive disabilities who are unable to take the California Standards Tests (CSTs) even with accommodations or modifications. The goal of this alternate test is to ensure that all California students can participate in the STAR Program.

Questions and Answers About the CAPA

Who takes the CAPA?

The CAPA is taken by special education students with significant cognitive disabilities who are in grades two through eleven or in ungraded programs. The students' individualized education programs (IEPs) must specify that they are to take the CAPA.

Must all students take the CSTs or the CAPA?

Yes. All students must take the CSTs or the CAPA unless their parents or guardians have submitted written requests to exempt them from the tests (*Education Code Section 60615*). It is very important that all students take part in the STAR Program, for each school district and school must have at least 95 percent of its

students participate in statewide tests in order to meet federal accountability requirements.

How do schools decide if a student takes the CAPA and what level of the CAPA he or she takes?

Each student's IEP team decides if a student takes the CAPA. There are five levels of the CAPA. Most students eligible for the CAPA take the level that corresponds to their grade placement.

Five CAPA Levels Provided

The five CAPA levels are as follows:

- Level I — grades two through eleven for students with complex, profound disabilities
- Level II — grades two and three
- Level III — grades four and five
- Level IV — grades six through eight
- Level V — grades nine through eleven

Parent/Guardian Guide to the California Alternate Performance Assessment

What subject areas are being assessed by the CAPA in 2007?

In spring 2007, students are being assessed in English-language arts and mathematics. Students taking the CAPA in grades five, eight, and ten also will take part in a field test of science performance tasks. The CAPA is aligned to selected California content standards that are appropriate for students taking the CAPA. The content standards identified for the CAPA are posted on the California Department of Education (CDE) Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/capa.asp>.

Who gives the CAPA and how are the questions asked?

A certificated or licensed school staff member who has been trained in CAPA testing procedures administers the CAPA. The examiner works with students individually. As each student is asked to perform a task, the examiner observes the performance and records the response according to a specific scoring guide.

When will I receive my student's 2007 STAR Student Report for CAPA?

Most parents and guardians will receive the 2007 STAR student reports by the end of September 2007.

What information will my student's report include?

The 2007 STAR Student Report for CAPA will show how well students performed according to selected California content standards in English-language arts and mathematics. Results will show the student's CAPA scale score and

performance level for each subject area tested. Performance levels of proficient or advanced indicate the student is meeting or exceeding the state's target for students taking the CAPA. Performance levels of basic, below basic, and far below basic indicate areas that need improvement.

Using CAPA Results

How are CAPA results used?

The IEP team – including teachers, administrators, parents, guardians, and/or support staff – uses CAPA results each year to help monitor your student's academic progress. The IEP team also uses the results to determine if the student will take the CSTs or the CAPA and, if taking the CAPA, the level of the CAPA that the student will take. The results also are reviewed with other information about student achievement to help make decisions about ways to improve student learning and school programs. In addition, CAPA scores are used, with results of other state tests, to meet state and federal school accountability requirements.

How to find out more...

If you have additional questions about the CAPA or the STAR Program, please direct them to your student's teacher, counselor, or the school office. You also will find answers to your questions about the STAR Program on the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/resources.asp>.

You Can Help Students Do Better on State Tests

- Visit the school to find out how your students' classroom instruction addresses California's content standards.
- Attend parent/guardian-teacher conferences to find out how well your students are achieving and what they need to do to improve.
- Discuss with your students the importance of going to school every day and doing their best on assignments and tests.
- Make sure your students have a quiet place to study and that they complete all homework assignments.
- Attend parent/guardian information meetings. Ask about the major tests given to students and other ways academic achievement is measured.
- Know when the major tests, such as tests in the STAR Program, are given and find out what you can do to help make sure your students are prepared.
- Discuss upcoming tests with your students and try to reduce their pretest anxieties. Reassure your students that the test results will provide useful information about what they know and what they still need to learn.
- Make sure your students attend school on testing days, get a good night's rest, and have breakfast before a big test.

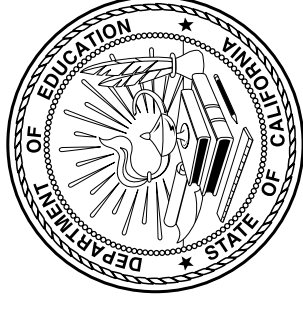
Get Involved

Students do better in school when parents and guardians get involved. In addition to the suggestions already described in this brochure, you can become involved by attending school events, joining parent/guardian groups, and visiting your school's Web site.

You also are encouraged to contact the school for additional information about your students' academic progress and the tests students are taking at school.

To Find Out More

Additional information on the STAR Program is available on the California Department of Education Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/>.



Standardized Testing and Reporting Program

Helping Your Students Achieve

2007

Suggestions for

Parents and Guardians

Parents and guardians play a very important part in their students' education. Encouraging students to do their best in school and showing positive attitudes toward completing school assignments well and on time can positively affect learning. Research about how students learn shows that a great deal can be done at home to increase a student's academic performance.

One question you may have about the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program is, "How can I help students do better on the tests?" The question really is, "How can I help students do well in school?" What you do at home can make a very big difference in how well students achieve in school.

Most Important of All

Let your students know how important their work at school is and how interested you are in what they are doing. Talk with them every day about:

- What they did at school
- What homework must be finished for the next day
- What needs to be done on a future project

Suggestions for helping students in reading, writing, mathematics, and other academic areas follow.

In Reading and Writing

- Listen to your students read and read stories aloud to and/or with them.
- Talk about what you and your students are reading and words they do not understand.
- Have family time when you and your students read a newspaper, magazine, or book.
- Encourage your students to write lists, notes, thank-you notes, requests, journals, recipes, short stories, and other types of writing.
- For writing assignments, talk with your students about what the assignment requires; help them list the points to cover. Take your students to the library or help them use the Internet if more information is needed.

- Set a limit on the amount of time your students watch television. Watch and discuss television programs with them whenever possible.

In Mathematics

- Check with your students every day to make sure homework assignments are completed.
- Attend parent/guardian classes about mathematics to prepare for questions that your students might ask at home.
- Ask questions to show how mathematics is used to help solve problems as you play games, watch television, or prepare to do a home project.

- Show your students how you use mathematics in what people do every day (cooking, shopping, or home repairs) or when buying materials to use in crafts, sewing, or building projects.

- Help your students read charts or graphs in newspapers and magazines and read maps when going on a family trip. It is important to help your students apply what they are learning.

In Other Academic Areas

Other academic areas, such as science and history-social science, challenge students to use reading, writing, and mathematics skills along with their knowledge about the subject. As your students read about a subject, ask them to tell you about it to reinforce their new knowledge and to use the new vocabulary they learned.

Share your interest in any academic area because students become interested in what is discussed at home. Family trips to museums, special television programs, news about a recent scientific discovery, or important world and local events should be shared and discussed. At times, let your students take the lead in talking about topics of interest to them.



California
Department
of
Education

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Accessing the STAR Program Web Site: A Guide for Parents and Guardians

The Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program provides resources for parents and guardians that are available through the California Department of Education (CDE) Web site. Step-by-step instructions to locate, read, download, or print these resources are provided in this guide.

Computer Requirements

In order to access the CDE Web site, you need a computer with an Internet connection and a Web browser such as Microsoft Internet Explorer, Safari, Netscape Navigator, or America Online. Many resources are posted on the CDE Web site as Portable Document Format (PDF) files. To open and read PDF files, you also will need Adobe Reader. Adobe Reader can be installed on your computer free of charge by downloading it from <http://www.adobe.com> or from the CDE Web site by clicking on the tab entitled "Download Free Readers." This tab is found in the lower right corner of many pages on the CDE Web site.

Accessing the STAR Program Web Site: A Guide for Parents and Guardians

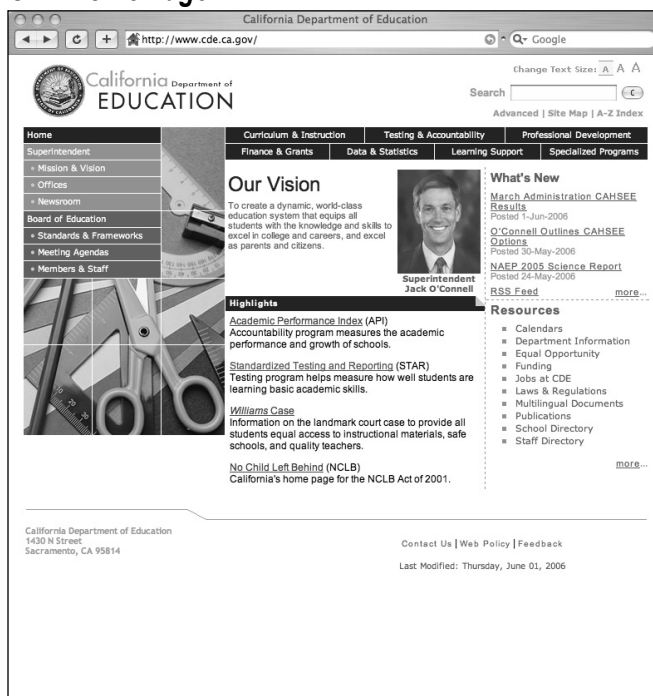
Step 1: Launch or open your Web browser.

Typically a Web page will appear when you launch your browser. At the top of this Web page and just under the toolbar, you will find a box often labeled as “Location,” “Go To,” or “Address.” This is where you type in the address of the Web site you want to access.

Step 2: Go to CDE home page.

Enter the following into the address line of your Web browser: <http://www.cde.ca.gov>

CDE Home Page



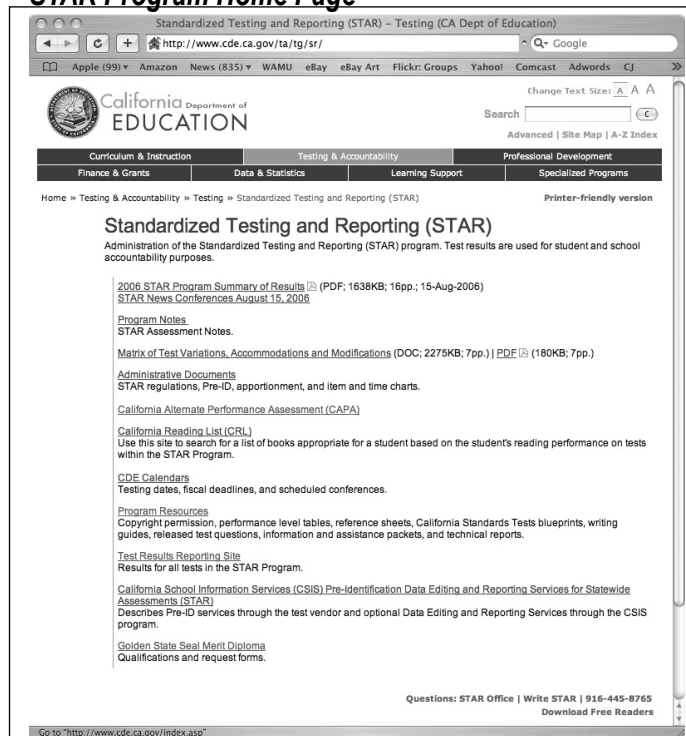
Step 3: Go to STAR Program home page.

From the CDE home page, click on “Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR)” located in the middle of the page under “Highlights.”

Option: To access information about any state test, click on “Testing & Accountability” in the menu bar along the top of the CDE home page. On the “Testing & Accountability” page, click on “Testing” located on the left side of the page or click on Standardized Testing and Reporting.

Web Address for STAR Program home page:
<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/>

STAR Program Home Page



Accessing the STAR Program Web Site: A Guide for Parents and Guardians

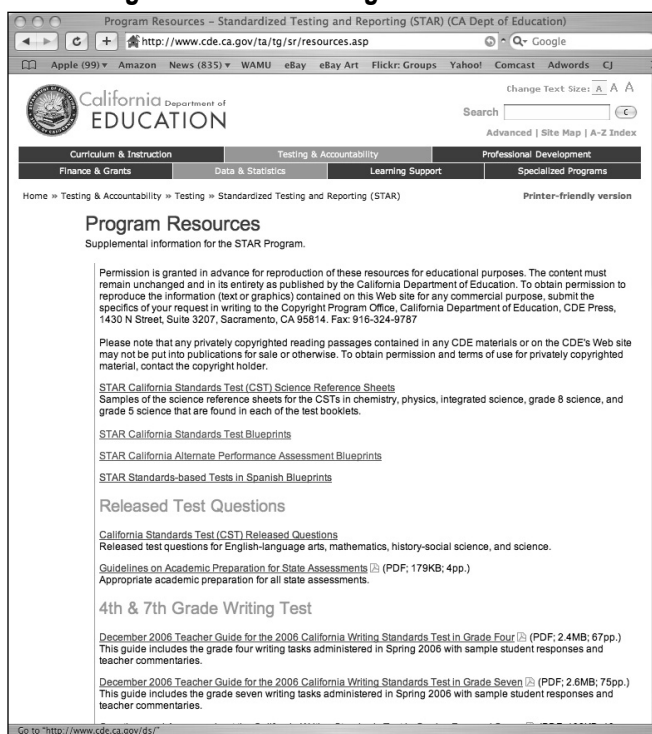
Step 4: Go to STAR Program Resources.

On the STAR Program home page and click on “Program Resources.”

The “Program Resources” page has information for parents and guardians, including sample released test questions for all grade levels and subjects tested by the California Standards Tests (CSTs). Use the vertical scroll bar on the right to scroll through this page.

Web Address for STAR Program Resources:
<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/resources.asp>

STAR Program Resources Page



Other Tips:

- Blue font is often used to indicate pages and documents that can be viewed, downloaded, or printed. Some of the Web pages also can be printed by clicking on “Printer-friendly version” located in the upper right corner of the page. The printer-friendly version is a display version of the Web page that is not cluttered with toolbars and tabs designed for navigation purposes.
- Any of the pages can be accessed by typing the Web address directly into the address line of the Internet browser. This address is also known as a Uniform Resource Locator (URL).
- You will find that some of the PDF files may take up to a few minutes to download to your computer. The speed of this process depends on a number of factors such as the speed of your connection to the Internet and the size of the file you are downloading.
- If you type a Web address or URL incorrectly, you will get an error message. Check to make sure you did not add in any extra spaces, used forward slashes (/), and spelled the address correctly.

Glossary of Frequently Used Acronyms for Assessment and Accountability

API — Academic Performance Index

The API is a state requirement under the Public Schools Accountability Act (PSAA) of 1999. The API is a single number that ranges from 200 to 1000 and indicates how well a school performs academically from year to year. A complete explanation of all API criteria is available on the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/ap/>.

AYP — Adequate Yearly Progress

AYP is a requirement under the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001. Under the NCLB criteria, schools and local educational agencies (i.e., school districts, county offices of education, and independent charters) must annually meet or exceed specified criteria in order to make AYP. A complete explanation of all AYP criteria is available on the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/ay/>.

Apr enda 3 — Apr enda, La prueba de logros en español, Tercera edición

A designated primary language test for the STAR Program, the Apr enda 3 is a norm-referenced achievement test series in Spanish for Spanish-speaking English learners in grades five through eleven (in 2007). The tests measure the achievement of general academic knowledge in reading, language, spelling, and mathematics in Spanish. The scores reported compare each student's score to the scores of a national sample of Spanish-speaking English learners.

CAT/6 Survey — California Achievement Tests, Sixth Edition Survey

The CAT/6 Survey, administered in grades three and seven only, is a set of nationally norm-referenced tests that measure the achievement of general academic knowledge and provide national comparisons.

CAPA — California Alternate Performance Assessment

The CAPA is an alternate test, aligned to selected state content standards in English-language arts and mathematics, that is given to students with significant cognitive disabilities who are unable to take the CSTs even with accommodations or modifications.

CDE — California Department of Education

The CDE provides leadership, assistance, oversight, and resources to local education agencies to create a dynamic, world-class education system that equips all students with the knowledge and skills to meet world-class standards and excel in college and careers. Directing the CDE is the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI), who is elected statewide.

CAHSEE — California High School Exit Examination

The CAHSEE, authorized by state law, is a standards-based test in English-language arts and mathematics that students must pass in order to receive a high school diploma.

CRL — California Reading List

The CRL is a Web-based tool that allows students and their teachers and parents or guardians to access a list of book titles organized by levels of difficulty. The CRL number found on each student's report is based on results of the CST in English-language arts.

CSTs — California Standards Tests

The CSTs are the primary component of the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program. These tests were developed exclusively for California's public schools to determine how well students are achieving state-adopted content standards in English-language arts, mathematics, history-social science, and science.

SBE — California State Board of Education

Authorized by law, the SBE is the governing and policy-making body of the California Department of Education. The SBE sets education policy for kindergarten through grade twelve in the areas of standards, instructional materials, assessment, and accountability. The SBE adopts textbooks for grades kindergarten through grade eight, adopts regulations to implement legislation, and has the authority to grant waivers of the *Education Code*. The SBE has 11 members, appointed by the Governor.

CSU — California State University

Authorized by law, the CSU is one of two public university systems in the state. The other system is the University of California. The CSU system includes 25 campuses located throughout California and the California Maritime Academy.

DPLT — Designated Primary Language Test

The DPLTs, designated by the SBE, are achievement tests in reading-language arts and mathematics that are given in Spanish to eligible Spanish-speaking English learners.

EAP — Early Assessment Program

The EAP, aligned to required competencies of incoming college freshmen and state content standards for kindergarten through grade twelve, may be taken by grade eleven students to earn an exemption from CSU-required English and/or mathematics placement tests or to determine additional coursework needed to prepare for college-level courses.

EPT — English Placement Test

The EPT is the English placement test for the California State University system.

ELM — Entry Level Mathematics

The ELM is the mathematics placement test for the California State University system.

IEP — Individualized Education Program

Required by law, the IEP is a specific education plan that is developed by a school's IEP team, including the parents and guardians, for every student with disabilities.

NCLB — No Child Left Behind Act of 2001

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 is a federal law enacted in January 2002 that reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). It mandates that all students (including students who are economically disadvantaged, are from racial or ethnic minority groups, have disabilities, or have limited English proficiency) in all grades meet the state academic content standards for proficiency in English-language arts and mathematics by 2014. Schools must demonstrate “Adequate Yearly Progress” (AYP) toward achieving that goal.

PSAA — Public Schools Accountability Act of 1999

The Public Schools Accountability Act (PSAA) of 1999 established California's state accountability system. Its primary goal is to help schools improve the academic achievement of all students. The cornerstone of the PSAA is the Academic Performance Index that measures the academic growth of schools each year and sets annual targets for that growth.

STAR — Standardized Testing and Reporting Program

Authorized by law until 2011, the STAR Program is administered annually to measure how well California public school students in grades two through eleven are learning the knowledge and skills of the state content standards for English-language arts, mathematics, history-social science, and science. The STAR Program for 2007 has five components:

- California Standards Tests (CSTs)
- California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA)
- California Achievement Tests, Sixth Edition Survey (CAT/6 Survey)
- Standards-based Tests in Spanish (STS)
- Aprenda, La prueba de logros en español, Tercera edición (Aprenda 3)

STS — Standards-based Tests in Spanish

A designated primary language test for the STAR Program, The STS are achievement tests in Spanish for English learners in grades two, three, and four (beginning in 2007). These tests are aligned to state content standards in reading-language arts and mathematics.